

## HOMELESS TASK FORCE PROGRESS REPORT

### *Tempe Youth Center Planned*

The Tempe Homeless Task Force presented their report and recommendations to the Tempe City Council in October 2000 when it was accepted for implementation. To begin the implementation process, TCC formed an ad hoc committee in January 2001, chaired by Linda Redman who co-chaired the Homeless Task Force. Consultant Sheila Harris was engaged to help the committee. Homeless agency providers were called together in February of this year to give input on implementation.

The two primary Homeless Task Force recommendations were to establish a new Homeless Coordinator position in Tempe and to establish a new Day Resources Center for homeless in Tempe.

- The Homeless Coordinator is scheduled for hire as of 7/1/2002 with City funds. The position will report to City of Tempe Social Services Division.
- To begin implementation of the Day Resources Center recommendation, the ad-hoc committee recommended that Tempe Community Council collaborate with Tumbleweed Youth Services to try and establish a new drop-in center for youth in Tempe. Planning is also underway for potential use of former Tempe Fire Station #1 on University Drive for an overall day resources center to help homeless adults and families. The fire station facility would not be available for about three years.

According to the report published by the Public Private Task Force on Homelessness in 1993, an estimated 2,500 youth under age 18 are homeless and living apart from their families in any given year in Maricopa County. The Maricopa Gaps and Need analysis estimates a need for 1,082 Outreach slots, of which only 262 exist currently, a gap of 76%. The Analysis also estimates the need for 1,082 Drop-In Center/Safe Haven slots with only 93 existing, a 93% gap. Key causal factors for youth homelessness are severe family conflict, physical and sexual abuse and parental alcohol and other drug abuse.

A proposal for the **Tempe Youth Center** was submitted by Tumbleweed to U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in May 2001 for a two-year grant of \$438,000. ***HUD announced in November that the proposal has been funded.*** Funding will be available in early 2002 and the center hopefully established by June 2002 at a site to be determined. TCC and the City of Tempe will provide support for the new center, as will East Valley Addiction Council, Tempe Community Action Agency and United Food Bank.

The new Tempe Youth Center would generally replicate the drop-in center program that Tumbleweed operates in Phoenix, called Pappas Place. Tumbleweed staff reports that about half of the youth encountered at Pappas Place come out of Tempe. Services of the Tempe Youth Center will include:

- Outreach
- Case management
- Education
- Life Skills
- Employment Assistance
- Health Care
- Counseling
- Substance Abuse Education
- HIV/Aids Education
- Transportation
- Basic Needs - Meals, showers, clothing laundry facilities



Services and housing referrals will be available to youth (ages 10 – 21) who are homeless and surviving on the street. It is anticipated that 100 - 200 youth will be served annually. Plans are for the Tempe Youth Center to be open five days a week for 40 hours, likely Tuesday - Saturday with some evening hours, to provide a place where youth can feel safe from the dangers on the streets and interact with caring adults who will advocate for them in accessing services. Staffing will be by four full time staff, a case manager and three outreach workers.

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Outreach staff will work with Tempe Police, Downtown Tempe Community (DTC) Homeless Ambassadors and other groups providing outreach services to identify homeless youth on Tempe streets. Outreach workers provide basic needs such as blankets, food, crisis intervention, referral and support.

The City of Tempe has been funding Home Base Youth Services for outreach to homeless youth in Tempe. In a related development, Home Base is working on new diversion services to help homeless youth charged with crimes in Tempe.

## TEMPE EMPTY BOWLS EVENT TO BENEFIT UNITED FOOD BANK'S KID'S CAFÉ PROGRAM

An interfaith coalition of Tempe community volunteers will soon see the culmination of nearly a year's worth of planning and hard work with the very first Empty Bowls event to be held in Tempe. The event will be held **Saturday, February 23 from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at Tempe Town Lake**. The volunteer group has partnered with Tempe Community Council and the City of Tempe to provide logistical and staff support, and has received donations from Whole Foods Market, SRP, the Tempe Union High Schools Education Foundation, as well as several generous individuals. This is truly a community-based effort.



The basic idea for Empty Bowls is simple. Participants create ceramic bowls, then serve a simple meal of soup, bread and water. Guests choose a bowl to use that day and to keep as a reminder that there are always Empty Bowls in the world. In exchange for a meal and the bowl, the guest gives a suggested donation of ten dollars.

*Pictured to the Lf.:* Bowls are created at the "Potter's Workshop" in Tempe. Potters Chip Hilton, Lisa Eby, Connie Schultejans, Minny Fischer, Joe Mann, Jeanne Frieden, Dino Castelli, Meg Burton Cahill, Julie Thurn Gluck, Glenice Graham and Bridget Harper worked to complete 140 bowls in a series of three workshops. Thank You!

All proceeds from the Tempe Empty Bowls event will go toward helping to fund United Food Bank's Kids Café programs in Tempe. With support from the Empty Bowls event proceeds, United Food Bank anticipates that at least **234 needy children per day** will receive a meal or nutritious snack at their Kids' cafe host sites in Tempe—Westside Community Center, operated by the Tempe Boys & Girls Club and Tempe First Assembly of God church.

Hunger continues to be a persistent global problem, not just in war-torn, impoverished countries, but right here in the United States as well. In fact, according to United Nations statistics, there were **828 million undernourished people** in all developing countries in 1996. Perhaps more shocking, however, is that here in the U.S. **31 million Americans** are either hungry or threatened by hunger. And, according to the USDA, right here in **Arizona 12.8 percent of households are food insecure**. This means that at some time during the previous year they did not always have access to enough food to meet basic needs.

Children are particularly prone to the damaging effects of food insecurity and hunger. The U.S. Census reports that **23.2% of children in Arizona live below the poverty level**. Research indicates a direct link between under-nourishment and hunger and a child's cognitive development and ability to learn. The lack of proper nourishment increases educational failure by decreasing attention span and memory and by causing an inability to perform tasks.

TCC and the sponsors would like to thank all the schools involved in making the many ceramic bowls needed for the event: Marcos De Niza HS, McKemy MS, Islamic Cultural Center, Desert Vista HS, Gililand MS, Corona Del Sol HS, Fees MS, McClintock HS, Connolly MS, Curry ES, Coronado HS, and Scales.



*Pictured Above:* Meg Burton Cahill, Joe Mann, and Dino Castelli

Please join us in the fight against hunger at the first Tempe Empty Bowls event on February 23, 2002. For sponsorship and additional information, please contact Martha Cronin at Tempe Community Council at (480) 858-2301.